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1971/10/24

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: Prime Minister Chou En-lai, People's Republic
of China
Chi P'eng-fei, Acting PRC Foreign Minister
Hsuing Hsiang-hui, Secretary to the Prime
Minister
Tang Wen-sheng and Chi Chao-chu, Chinese
Interpreters
Notetaker

Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the
President for National Security Affairs
Winston Lord, Senior Staff Member, NSC

PLACE: Government Guest House, Peking

DATE & TIME: October 24, 1971, 10:28 a.m. - 1:55 p.m.

GENERAL SUBJECT: General Philosophy and Principles, Communique

Dr. Kissinger: You can make decisions by a 2/3 vote.

PM Chou: That will not be done.

Dr. Kissinger: One point about the visit I would like to bring to the
Prime Minister's attention. The Prime Minister may be aware of the
fact that he (the President) will announce another statement about
Vietnam around the 15th of November on troop withdrawals.

PM Chou: We heard about such an announcement before but nothing
recently.

Dr. Kissinger: The statement will probably be made around November 8.
We have not yet told our Cabinet.

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PM Chou: Before it was to be held the 15th of November and now it will be before that, around the 8th or 10th?

Dr. Kissinger: About the 8th; we are not certain yet. That's why we wanted the announcement about the visit around the 20th, so that the two wouldn't seem related.

PM Chou: As for the announcement on withdrawal from Vietnam, that has been decided also?

Dr. Kissinger: It will be another increment.

PM Chou: It is not an announcement for the final date for total withdrawal.

Dr. Kissinger: We are hoping to negotiate that on the 1st or 8th, as I told the Prime Minister.

PM Chou: The 1st or 8th.

Dr. Kissinger: We have suggested the first, and I have been told that we will receive word whether the 1st or 8th is acceptable.

PM Chou: You mean that if an agreement is reached in your meeting about the total withdrawal of United States troops in Vietnam, then the President will announce that but if not, he will anyway announce a number of troops from Vietnam?

Dr. Kissinger: Yes. I do not believe we can settle negotiations by November 8, but it is my judgment that if negotiations can succeed at all they should do so before the end of this year.

PM Chou: We hope that you will be able to succeed in the talks.

Dr. Kissinger: So do we.

PM Chou: It's a most urgent issue relating to easing tensions in the Far East.

Dr. Kissinger: We understand.

PM Chou: After you gave us the draft communique for the President's visit, we thought of various ways of dealing with it. One is to give you our draft. But there was also another idea because according to your original draft communique we saw you tried your best to speak in general terms and use as much common terms as possible. On the concrete matters you only dealt with bilateral relations, and you left off other items for the development of events.

During your President's visit, as I have said, we believe the main talks will be with Chairman Mao Tsetung. And as for what you put in your draft communique on the exchange of views between Chairman Mao Tsetung and President Nixon and the explanation of their stands and points of view, and as you put in your draft communique on world affairs too, that will have to be left to be seen. In this aspect the two leaders have not yet met and have not had contact yet either.

As for between us two, there have been a lot of exchanges both on your last visit and your present visit. And there is no question that no doubt on the matter of specific issues we have both made an exposition of our own points of view and stated our own positions. Of course, we have also found some common ground.

Therefore, the result is that our ideas regarding the joint communique for the President's visit is different from yours, opposite. We would like to put forward a position on specific issues. As for the general exposition of our views on international affairs and the international situation, and our stand and views and so on, if these are to be written in a joint communique then there is the question that the leaders, that is Chairman Mao Tsetung and President Nixon, have not met. But we can think of some possibilities now.

So after going back yesterday and studying your draft and also after reporting to Mao Tsetung, we feel there are difficulties in drafting such a communique at the present time. For instance, in your original draft there also were some general principles. In your draft we found there were some general principles and in this aspect we found you tried to put in common points, but we found that in reality there were some points in which we would not agree.

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And we also found that there were some points in the draft communique, in the part on general principles, that we think when President Nixon comes to visit China he will have quite full discussions with Chairman Mao Tsetung on. During your previous visit I said something in regard to these aspects, but during this visit I have not said much about it.

Dr. Kissinger: What aspects?

PM Chou: The general approach to the international situation. (Kissinger nods) You used of course some of our terms, but the prospects for the future and the explanations for these terms are, of course, entirely different. Of course, in your draft you also used some of our terms, that is that "turmoil still exists in many parts of the world," and that "the danger of military conflict remains." But not only the danger of military conflict, but military conflict and wars exist in the world today. And your way of resolving this is to do it in accordance with general principles which you enumerate in the draft, to take steps to eliminate their causes, that is the causes of military conflict and turmoil. Last time when we met I mentioned that point, that there is great chaos in the world.

Dr. Kissinger: I remember very well.

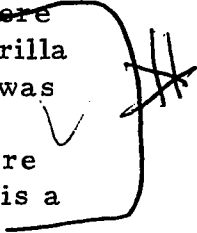
PM Chou: And that since the Second World War local and regional wars have not ceased, and especially in the Far East, the situation in the Far East proves the situation. Why are there differences in our views in relation to this matter? Last time after you left, President Nixon made a statement in which he admitted the changes in the world. That is, before you came last time, your President made a statement in which he admitted changes in the world, and before you came this time, he made another speech in which he reiterated his views in his inauguration speech on a "generation of peace."

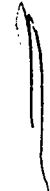
What is the real situation? What does a generation of peace mean? Maybe it is like what Dr. Kissinger wrote about in a certain book which we know you are interested in, and that is the span of time of peace by Metternich. Of course, we notice you have not mentioned this for a long time. But that has made me go back to review the history of the French Revolution and the history of the American War of Independence.

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That was a time of great revolutions when feudal rulers were being swept away and the world was entering a time of bourgeois democracy. Of course, you are all very familiar with the American War of Independence. In that time three million soldiers in the United States under Washington resisted the British colonial policy and embarked on a war of independence. The war lasted eight years, and those were pioneers in independence, although the British at that time had a great empire and the sun never set on the British flag. At that time the British Empire was most proud, believing itself in a Victorian Age.

At that time there was only one country, France, and not even the strength of the whole country of France but only the part with Lafayette, who went to the United States to assist the revolution. And it was only because of this war of revolution that the United States made such great strides towards development in the 20th Century. Of course there was the Civil War which was before the developments of the 20th Century. This proves that a minority can be victorious over the majority and the weak over the strong and the little over the big.

But the present population of Cambodia is even more than the population of the United States in Washington's time, three million only. Why was it possible for the Americans in that time to be victorious? Because there was a new emerging force. And it applied tactics that were of a guerrilla style, which we mentioned last time. We mentioned last time that it was George Washington who had initial guerrilla warfare. Chairman Mao and the Vietnamese people had not appeared then. The Americans were the first to employ guerrilla warfare and be victorious in it, and this is a very good lesson to the people of the world. 

We know that you wish that your President continue to be President of the United States to preside over the 200th Anniversary of America. If it should be said by a President that it was not easy for Washington at that time to win victory, and this is worth the pride of the people of America, then the many people in the world at present who wish to win liberation could also win on that example, to rely on one's strength. There is no reason why you should say it should not be done; and they should be supported. The last instance was the French Revolution. 

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